Trusted Information Creator
Patient Information Forum

NHS
University Hospitals of Leicester
NHS Trust

4 step diet plan when you have or are at risk of a bowel obstruction

Nutrition and Dietetics

Information for Patients

Produced: November 2026
Review: November 2029
Leaflet number: 1801 Version: 1

Who is this information sheet for?

This advice should only be followed with support from a registered Dietitian/nutrition team.

This information is for you if you:

- Have been diagnosed with a bowel obstruction.
- Are at risk of developing a bowel obstruction from a cancer diagnosis, from cancer spreading to the bowel or if you have scarring following surgery.
- Have a mass or hernia in your bowel and are at risk of bowel obstruction.
- Have strictures caused by Crohn's Disease.
- Have delayed gastric emptying.

Please always contact your Dietitian for help if you have any questions or concerns.

My Dietitian…….

Diet sheet written with acknowledgment to the work and resources from The Royal Surrey County NHS Foundation Trust Department of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Contents

Page 3- Who can use this information sheet?

Page 4- Why is it important for you to eat the right sort of foods?

Page 5- The 4 stage bowel obstruction diet

Page 6- Step 1: Clear fluids only

Page 7- Step 2: All thin fluids

Page 10- Step 3: Smooth or pureed low fibre foods - no bread products

Page 17- Step 4: Soft sloppy low fibre foods - no bread products

Page 25- What can I eat and drink after step 4?

Page 26- Which foods can I eat in step 3 or 4?

Page 26 -Fruits

Page 27- Vegetables

Page 29- Breads and cereals

Page 30- Potato, rice and pasta

Page 31- Protein

Page 32- Dairy foods

Page 33- Sweet snacks

Page 34- Savoury snacks

Page 35- Condiments

Page 36- Contact details

Who can use this information sheet?

This information sheet is only to be used under the care of a Registered Dietitian. This information needs to be explained so that you know how to use it.

There is not much evidence to show the best diet to follow if you have, or may develop, a bowel blockage. Everyone is different. Your symptoms can change from day to day. Because of this, some people may need to make more changes to their diet than others.

How to use this information sheet

This booklet is divided into **4 steps.**

We recommend that you read this information sheet carefully and write down any questions that you have about the diet. Please always ask your Dietitian if you are not sure about what to do.

Your Dietitian will guide you on which step you should be following. They will advise you if you can move to the next step.

It is to be expected that you may go backwards and forwards through the 4 steps depending on your symptoms. For example, if your bowel stops working or if you are in pain, you will have to return to liquids until your symptoms settle.

You might need supplementary nutrition whilst you are following this diet to make sure that you are meeting your nutritional needs. You may be given oral nutritional supplement drinks, or some patients may need parenteral nutrition. Your Dietitian will also tell you if you need a vitamin or mineral supplement.

Why is it important for you to eat the right sort of foods?

If you have a mass in your small or large intestine (also known as bowel or gut), or it is narrower than normal, you may be at risk of a blockage. A blockage is when you are not able to poo and have symptoms such as pain or vomiting. You may have already been admitted to hospital with a blockage.

Humans are not able to digest certain foods and so they can pass through our body without being broken down properly. They can pass through your gut in big pieces. It can increase your risk of a blockage by getting caught in a narrow space in your small or large intestine. This can also happen if you do not chew your food properly.

Examples of foods that humans cannot digest are:

- the skins, pips and seeds of fruit and vegetables
- fibrous fruits like rhubarb, celery
- raw or undercooked vegetables
- beans, nuts and pulses like lentils, chickpeas
- fibrous vegetables like mushrooms, sweetcorn, lettuce and other salad leaves
- bread and bread products such as crumpets, muffins, doughnuts, since they form a ball (bolus) and may not pass through a narrowed space.

Fibre also makes our poo (stools) form a ‘bulk’ and makes them solid. When you are at risk of bowel obstruction it is better to have poo that is softer and easier to pass. This is why you are encouraged to have a low fibre diet. Following this diet will mean that your poo will be looser than normal.

Certain foods may also lead to symptoms such as:

- pain,
- bloating,
- feeling full,
- feeling sick,
- tightness across your abdomen (stomach),

You may also find it harder to poo.

You have been given this booklet because changing your diet can lower your risk of a blockage. Eating the right foods for you may also help to reduce your symptoms.

As well as choosing the right sort of foods, you will have to eat very differently with this diet. It is important not to eat or drink large amounts of food or fluid in one sitting. This may cause more symptoms of bloating and pain. You may find it hard to change the habit of ‘3 meals per day’. If you are at risk of bowel obstruction eating and drinking ‘little and often’ will help with your symptoms.

The 4 Step Bowel Obstruction Diet

Step 1	**Clear fluids only**	Page 6
Step 2	**All thin liquids**	Page 7
Step 3	**Smooth or pureed low fibre foods. No bread products**	Page 10
Step 4	**Soft sloppy low fibre foods. No bread products**	Page 17

Step 1: Clear fluids only

When do I follow Step 1?

- You need to follow Step 1 if you have had a **complete blockage**. When you start to pass wind again and your symptoms settle, you will be encouraged to start to sip on **clear fluids (liquids)** only. You may be asked to start clear fluids before you poo. We recommend having small amounts, regularly during the day.
- You will also need to follow Step 1 if you are getting **symptoms when you drink liquids from Step 2** such as a cup of milky coffee or tea.
- You will need to follow Step 1 if you have moved to Step 2, 3 or 4 and start to develop **severe symptoms and your bowels stop working.**

What can I drink?

You can only drink clear liquids. Examples are:

- Water
- Black tea
- Black coffee
- Squash
- Smooth clear fruit juice like apple or cranberry juice
- Flavoured water (still)
- Oasis®
- Rubicon® (still)
- Vimto®
- Coconut water
- Herbal and fruit teas
- Clear consommé soup (no bits)
- Clear miso soup
- Hot cup of Marmite® or Bovril®
- Hot cup of water with a dissolved stock cube or stock pot
- Still isotonic sports drinks such as Lucozade Sport®, Gatorade Sport®, Powerade®

You can also suck on boiled sweets and mints. These must not be chewed or swallowed in pieces.

Try to sip on small amounts of drinks through the day. This is the easiest way to increase your intake of liquids. It will help to stop you getting dehydrated.

Nutritional supplements

Clear fluids do not provide all the nutrition your body needs. Your Dietitian will prescribe extra nutrition, such as nutritional supplement drinks or vitamins and minerals.

Step 2: All thin liquids

When can I start Step 2?

If you have been able to poo regularly after starting clear fluids and your symptoms from bowel obstruction have settled, you will be advised to move to Step 2. This means that you can have **all** forms of thin liquids.

You will need to return to thin liquids/Step 2 if you have moved on to Step 3 or 4 and start to develop symptoms again. Once the symptoms settle you can then start to slowly move back up to Step 3 and start to introduce solids again.

How can I start Step 2?

You must start to have drinks in Step 2 very slowly if you have been following Step 1. This will let your body tell you if you can tolerate the changes and continue with Step 2.

Each day add 1 extra drink.

If you increase slowly, you are more likely to be able to stay on Step 2.

Please remember:

- The liquids need to be a thin consistency. No thicker than whole milk.
- The liquids need to be completely smooth with no bits.
- The liquids need to be low in fibre like thin smooth fruit juice with no bits, no smoothies.

What can I drink in Step 2?

The following drinks give energy, protein, vitamins and minerals. Always use whole milk where possible. Try to sip on small amounts of drinks throughout the day. This is the easiest way to increase your intake of liquids and it will help to stop you getting dehydrated.

Milk or dairy free milk alternatives, for example, almond, soya, oat, cashew, hazelnut, coconut, rice, hempseed, pea protein	Flavoured milk like strawberry (no bits), chocolate, banana. Add Nesquik®, Milo® or Crusha®
Thin milkshakes like Frijj®, Yop®, Yazoo® Shaken Udder®	Flavoured dairy free thin milkshakes such as Alpro®, Oatly®, Rude Health®
Yoghurt drinks such as Yakult®, Actimel®, Yop®	Kefir drinks like Biotiful®, COCOS®, The Collective®, Muller®
Milky coffee, latté, cappuccino, iced coffee	Protein milkshakes for example, UFIT®, Barebells®, Nurishment®
Hot chocolate made with milk or milk alternatives like Options Vegan Belgian Hot Chocolate®, Galaxy Vegan Instant Hot Chocolate®	Horlicks®, Ovaltine®
Thin smooth soups, for example, chicken, oxtail, sweet potato, butternut squash, leek and potato, cream of tomato, cream of mushroom, carrot and coriander, mulligatawny	Thin smooth fruit juice (no bits)
Thin custard (fresh, tinned, powdered). Loosen with milk or milk alternatives if too thick.	Jelly, milky jelly (without fruit) with instant whipped/spray cream
Smooth ice cream, vegan ice cream, smooth frozen yoghurt, sorbet (no bits)	Ice lollies, Mini Milk® lollies, frozen yoghurt lollies

You can also suck on boiled sweets, mints and smooth chocolate. These must not be chewed or swallowed in pieces.

You can also include the clear fluids from Step 1 on page.

Nutritional supplements

Clear fluids do not provide all the nutrition your body needs. Your Dietitian will prescribe extra nutrition, such as nutritional supplement drinks or vitamins and minerals.

What do I do if my symptoms return?

If you start to have any of the following, please contact your Doctor or Dietitian right away:

- Feeling sick (nausea)
- Vomiting
- Feeling full after drinking or eating
- You do not poo for more than 2 days,
- A feeling of ‘tightness’ across your stomach
- Feeling bloated
- Tummy (abdominal) swelling
- Tummy (abdominal) pain

These symptoms could be a sign that your bowel may be blocked or partly blocked.

Speak to your Dietitian so that they can advise you what to do. If you cannot to speak to them right away, return to Step 1/clear fluids only. Once your symptoms start to settle and you have spoken to your team, you can slowly move back to Step 2.

Step 3: Smooth or puréed low fibre foods - no bread products

When can I start Step 3?

If you have been able to poo regularly and you are not in any pain after several days of Step 2 drinks, your Dietitian or Doctor will ask you to move to Step 3.

This means that you can start to eat **smooth or puréed, low fibre foods**, and all liquids in Steps 1 and 2.

What can I eat and drink in Step 3?

Introduce the foods in Step 3 very slowly. This will let your body tell you if you can tolerate the changes and continue with a smooth, purée diet.

Each day add only 1 extra food.

If you increase slowly you are more likely to be able to stay on Step 3.

Always eat small portions several times during the day. A usual meal pattern is not right. Larger meals may increase your risk of symptoms returning.

You should:

- Aim to eat at least 6 times each day.
- All food needs to be smooth or should be able to melt in your mouth.
- All food should be able to ‘fall off’ a spoon easily.
- All food should be swallowed without needing to chew it.
- All food should be low in fibre.
- You can have **1 portion** of fruit and **1 portion** of vegetables each day **only**. Some fruit and vegetables must be completely avoided. See pages 26 to 28 for a list of foods to eat and foods to avoid.
- Please look at the lists on pages 29 to 36 for other foods that are high in fibre and need to be avoided such as lentils, chickpeas, beans.

Top tips for a smooth, puréed low fibre diet

- Equipment: Using a hand blender is the simplest way of producing puréed foods.
- Puréed foods can look more appetising if they are presented separately. For example, separate a puréed meat casserole from the (allowed) vegetables and potatoes.
- Colour is also important. Try serving brightly coloured vegetables such as puréed carrots with mashed potato and puréed chicken and sauce/gravy.
- Cooked foods should be cut into small pieces then liquidised, blended or mashed, and if needed sieved to a smooth consistency.
- You will need to add extra liquid to most foods before or after they have been puréed. To improve the taste and nutritional value. Add whole milk, melted butter or spread, cream (milk based or soya/oat cream) or creamy soup (with no bits) instead of water.
- Use garlic or chilli-infused oil when cooking to add flavour.

What foods do you need to avoid in Step 3?

There are some food you cannot eat even if puréed.

Do not eat:

- the pips, skins and seeds of fruits and vegetables
- wholegrains
- lentils
- chickpeas and beans
- nuts and seeds

These foods are not easily digested and may get caught in your bowel.

Do not eat bread and bread products like crumpets, muffins, doughnuts, naan, roti. They can form a ball (bolus) and may not pass through a narrowed space in your intestine. This can increase your risk of an obstruction.

Please look at the lists on pages 26 to 36 for more details.

Meal, snack and drink ideas for Step 3

The lists below suggest meal and snack ideas for step 3. Please see the lists on pages 26 to 36 for specific food groups of foods that are allowed and which foods need to be avoided.

Breakfast

- ‘Soggy’ cereal such as cornflakes or Rice Krispies® soaked in whole milk, milk alternatives or chocolate milk.
- Small bowl of Ready Brek® made with milk or milk alternatives.
- Puréed sweetened fruit: tinned pears, stewed fruit, fruit compote (1 portion of fruit per day from the allowed list).
- Full fat smooth (no lumps) yoghurt or fromage frais, Petit filou®, Skyr® yoghurt, Coconut collaborative® natural yoghurt, Alpro®, Greek Style plain yoghurt alterative, Koko® dairy free plain yoghurt.
- Glass of fruit juice (no bits).
- Milkshake (see Step 2 on page 7 for options).
- Smooth scrambled egg.

Add sugar, syrup, honey, seedless jam or marmalade, cream, butter or spread for extra nutrition.

Small meals

You are unlikely to be able to manage your normal portions at meals. In fact, it is better to have a very small plate every time you eat. Leave it an hour and then come back to have another small plate of the same meal or a pudding if you like. This will allow the food to pass through your gut and will reduce the chance of a blockage or partial blockage or symptoms of pain and bloating returning.

Mashed potatoes or mashed sweet potatoes (no skin) served with:

- puréed meats and gravy,
- puréed meat alternatives for example, Quorn® mince or vegetarian sausages, Beyond meat® meatballs or sausages with plenty of gravy or sauce,
- puréed mince dishes,
- puréed fish with white, cheese or smooth tomato sauce,
- puréed fish pie,
- puréed stew (made with root vegetables),
- blended gammon or ham with white or cheese sauce,

Jacket potato (no skin) mashed with:

- grated cheese and butter,
- puréed tuna mayonnaise,
- puréed egg mayonnaise,
- smooth tikka or curry sauce,
- spaghetti hoops, tinned spaghetti,

Melt-in-the-mouth crisps, crackers or breadsticks such as butter puffs, Carrs® cheese melts, Cornish wafers, crisp bakes, French or Melba toast, Ritz®, Tuc® topped with:

- smooth dips like sour cream, taramasalata, smooth guacamole, cheese dip
- smooth tuna, salmon or egg mayonnaise
- tinned spaghetti or ravioli
- cream cheese, cottage cheese
- vegan soft cheese alternatives
- smooth paté (crab, tuna, mackerel, chicken liver)
- smooth, ripe avocado

Scrambled egg with added butter and grated cheese.

Or, smooth ‘scrambled’ medium firm tofu with:

- added butter or spread and grated cheese,
- turmeric, curry powder or other spices,
- soy, teriyaki, hoisin, tamari sauces,

Smooth, ripe avocado with:

- smooth tuna mayonnaise,
- balsamic vinegar,

Bowl of smooth soup, no bits:

- Butternut, carrot, broccoli and stilton, leek and potato, chicken, oxtail, cream of tomato, mulligatawny, smooth fish chowder (no sweetcorn).
- Soup can be homemade, bought fresh, tinned or powdered.
- You will need to **avoid** soups that are very high in fibre and that contain lentils, beans, celery, peas for example, minestrone, pea and ham.
- You can add silken or firm tofu for extra creaminess and added protein.
- Always blend soup so that it is smooth.
- Creamy soups have extra nutrition.
- Blended casserole dishes with added gravy made into a thick soup.

You can add 1 (puréed) portion of the allowed vegetables to meals that do not already contain vegetables such as carrots, parsnips, butternut squash, heads of broccoli or cauliflower.

Try 1 of the following to add flavour:

- redcurrant jelly,
- mint jelly,
- soy sauce,
- tamari sauce,
- hoisin sauce,
- tomato sauce,
- harissa,
- Worcestershire sauce,
- Henderson's relish,
- smooth mustard,
- sriracha,
- Tabasco® sauce,
- nutritional yeast,
- wasabi paste,
- miso paste,
- Bovril®,
- Marmite®,

Try 1 of the following to add extra nutrition to soups and sauces:

- butter,
- spread,
- mayonnaise,
- cream,
- grated cheese,
- cream cheese,
- crème fraiche,

Puddings

We recommend you have a break following your meal before having pudding:

- Smooth milk puddings like plain or chocolate custard, rice pudding, semolina, tapioca.
- Smooth puddings such as, blancmange, mousse, fruit fool, milk jelly, Angel Delight®, instant whip, egg custard, crème caramel, Gu® desserts.
- Smooth dairy free puddings like Alpro® soya desserts, Coconut Collaborative® Little Chocolate Pots.
- Sponge or other cakes blended with chocolate sauce, cream, custard or ice cream for example, Madeleines, Battenberg, Madeira, Angel Slices, caramel cake bars, mini chocolate rolls, lemon slices, banana bread.
- Tinned or stewed fruit with added cream, yoghurt, crème fraiche, custard or ice cream (1 portion of fruit per day).
- Apple pie blended to a smooth consistency with added cream, yoghurt, ice cream or custard (1 portion of fruit per day).
- Full fat smooth yoghurt, fromage frais, petit filou.
- High protein yoghurts such as Skyr®, Arla protein®, Lindahls Kvarg®.
- Dairy free yoghurts like Alpro® soya, The Coconut Collaborative®, The Collective®, COCOS®, KoKo®, Oykos®, Oatly Oatgurt®.
- Smooth ice cream, sorbet, frozen yoghurt, Mini Milk®, mini Magnum®.

Add sugar, syrup, honey, seedless jam or marmalade, lemon curd, treacle, cream, custard, ice cream, crème fraiche, evaporated or condensed milk to add extra nutrition

Choose 'full fat' options for extra nutrition.

Snacks

The above pudding ideas could be eaten at any time of day as a snack:

- ‘Dunked’ plain biscuits in a warm milky drink such as rich tea, Nice®, malted milk, custard creams, Oreo®, ginger nuts, bourbons.
- Bowl of cornflakes or Rice Krispies® soaked in whole milk, milk alternatives or chocolate milk.
- Crisps that ‘melt-in-the-mouth’ for example, Skips®, Wotsits®, Quavers®, Pom Bears®, Pringles®.
- Add smooth dips like sour cream, smooth guacamole, taramasalata, cheese dip, aioli.
- Melt-in-the-mouth crackers (ensure these are well chewed before swallowing) (see page 34 for options).
- Spoonful of smooth nut butter like almond butter, peanut butter.
- Spoonful of hazelnut spread or Nutella®.
- Spoonful of any other smooth spread like Lotus® Biscoff spread, smooth chocolate spread, Sweet Freedom® chocolate spread.
- Portion of soft cheese (no bits) for example, Laughing Cow®, Dairylea®, Philadelphia®, Primula®, Quark® or cream cheese.

Drinks

Make sure to drink plenty of fluid each day to prevent dehydration. You can choose any of the liquids listed in Steps 1 and 2 on pages 6 to 8. Choosing nourishing liquids from Step 2 will help to increase your nutritional intake.

Nutritional supplements

Clear fluids do not provide all the nutrition your body needs. Your Dietitian will prescribe extra nutrition, such as nutritional supplement drinks or vitamins and minerals.

What do I do if my symptoms return?

If you start to have any of the following, please contact your Doctor or Dietitian right away:

- Feeling sick (nausea)
- Vomiting
- Feeling full after drinking or eating
- Your bowels do not open for more than 2 days
- A feeling of ‘tightness’ across your stomach
- Feeling bloated
- Tummy (abdominal) swelling
- Tummy (abdominal) pain

These symptoms could be a sign that your bowel may be blocked or partly blocked. Speak to your Dietitian so that they can advise you what to do. If you cannot to speak to them right away, return to Step 1 and clear fluids only. Once your symptoms start to settle and you have spoken to your team, you can slowly move back to Step 2 and then to Step 3.

Step 4: Soft, sloppy low fibre diet - no bread products

When can I start Step 4?

If you have been able to poo regularly and you are not in any pain after several days on Step 3, your Dietitian or Doctor will ask you to move to Step 4.

This means that you can start to **eat soft sloppy low fibre foods**, as well as all liquids and smooth, puréed foods from Steps 1, 2 and 3.

What can you eat and drink in Step 4?

You must not eat any bread and bread products.

Introduce the foods in Step 4 very slowly. This will let your body tell you if you can tolerate the changes and continue with a soft sloppy low fibre diet. Each day add only 1 extra food. If you increase slowly you are more likely to be able to stay on Step 4 and not get symptoms that mean you need to go back to Step 1, 2 or 3.

- Always eat small portions several times during the day.
- All food needs to be soft, moist and sloppy.
- All food should be chewed well before you swallow each mouthful.
- Make sure all your meals have additional sauce or gravy to moisten them.
- All food and liquids should be low in fibre.
- You can have **1 portion** of fruit and **1 portion** of vegetables each day **only**. Some fruit and vegetables must be avoided. See pages 26 to 28 for a list of foods you can eat and foods to avoid.
- Please look at the lists on pages 29 to 36 for other foods that are high in fibre and need to be avoided for example, lentils, chickpeas, beans.

Top tips for a soft, sloppy, low fibre diet

- A little and often approach to eating and drinking is advised. Aim for small frequent meals and snacks, rather than 3 meals per day.
- Use sauces, butter, gravy, cream or custard can help to soften foods and keep them moist.
- Foods can be softened by chopping, mincing and mashing.
- Small sips of a drink can help with swallowing foods.
- Avoid foods that need a lot of chewing or do not break down well when chewed.
- Use garlic or chilli-infused oil when cooking to add flavour.
- If there are no vegetables in your dish, then you can add **1 portion** of ‘to eat' foods to your meal. See page 27.

What foods do you need to avoid on Step 4?

Some foods need to be completely avoided (even if puréed). Do not eat:

- the pips, skins and seeds of fruits and vegetables,
- wholegrains,
- lentils, chickpeas and beans,

These are not easily digested and may get caught in your bowel.

You must not eat bread and bread products like crumpets, muffins, doughnuts. They can form a bolus (ball) and may not pass through a narrowed space. This can increase your risk of a blockage or partial blockage and may increase your symptoms.

Please look at the lists on pages 26 to 36 for more details.

Meal, snack and drink ideas for Step 4

The lists below suggest meal and snack ideas for Step 4. Please see the lists on pages 26 to 36 for specific food groups of foods you can eat and cannot.

Breakfast

- Cornflakes or Rice Krispies® soaked in whole milk, milk alternatives or chocolate milk.
- Ready Brek® with plenty of whole milk or milk alternatives.
- Stewed or tinned fruit, fruit compote (1 portion of fruit per day from the ‘to eat' list on page 26).
- Full fat smooth yoghurt, fromage frais, Petit filou®, Skyr® yoghurt, Coconut collaborative® natural yoghurt, Alpro® Greek Style plain yoghurt alterative, Koko® dairy free plain yoghurt.
- Glass of fruit juice (no bits).
- Milkshake (see Step 2 on page 7 for options).
- Omelette, scrambled, poached or soft, boiled egg.
- Smooth “scrambled” medium-firm tofu with added butter or spread and grated cheese.

Add sugar, syrup, honey, seedless jam or marmalade, cream, butter or spread for extra nutrition.

Small meals

You are unlikely to be able to manage your normal portions at meals. In fact, it is better to have a very small plate every time you eat. Leave it for 1 hour and then come back to have another small plate of the same meal or a pudding if you like. This will allow the food to pass through your gut. It will reduce the chance of a blockage or partial blockage or symptoms of pain and bloating returning.

- Lancashire hotpot, meat or chicken casserole (make sure the meat is very tender and chewed well before swallowing. Serve with plenty of sauce/gravy). Casseroles can also be made with meat or chicken alternatives.
- Cottage pie, shepherd's pie with plenty of gravy.
- Corned beef hash with plenty of gravy.

Peeled, mashed or boiled potatoes, mashed sweet potatoes, polenta, buckwheat, bulgur wheat, millet, pearl barley, quinoa or white couscous served with:

- minced beef, lamb, turkey, chicken, pork,
- meatballs with plenty of sauce or gravy,
- minced meat alternatives like Quorn® mince with plenty of gravy or sauce,
- vegetarian sausages, Beyond meat®, Green Cuisine® meatballs or sausages with plenty of gravy or sauce,
- chicken alternatives with plenty of sauce,
- poached fish fillets in sauce (check for bones) (white, cheese or tomato (made with passata) sauce),
- fish pie, fish mornay, fish fingers (well-chewed),
- tinned fish (tuna, salmon, no bones) with plenty of mayonnaise or sauce,
- stews and casseroles (make sure 1 vegetable portion per day is from the 'to eat' list on page 27).

Eggs

- Scrambled egg with extra butter and grated cheese.
- Grated cheese omelette.
- Soft poached or boiled egg.
- Fillings from quiche or crustless quiche (no products from the avoid lists on pages 26 to 36).
- Soufflés for example, cheese, salmon.

Pasta (white, quinoa, spelt pasta), dried or fresh

- Well-cooked small pasta shapes served with plenty of sauce for example, cheese sauce or dairy free cheese, Sacla® Vegan.
- Cheese sauce, smooth tomato sauce, bolognaise sauce (made with passata).

- Sloppy macaroni cheese.
- Tinned spaghetti or ravioli.

Noodles

- Egg, rice, vermicelli, udon, kabuto, ramen, soba.
- Add a small portion of noodles to a smooth soup or broth (no vegetables).
- Try teriyaki, hoisin, soy or tamari sauce, or miso paste to add flavour.
- Wontons in clear soup or broth.

Rice (always use white rice) for example, long grain, risotto, paella, jasmine or basmati

- served with curry with small pieces of tender meat, fish, soft cooked tofu/silken tofu or well-cooked vegetables from the ‘to eat' lists on page 27, for example, sweet potato, cauliflower, squash (add more sauce than rice).
- served with plenty of bolognaise sauce or chilli con carne (no beans, more sauce than rice).

Jacket potato (no skin) mashed with:

- grated cheese and butter,
- tuna mayonnaise,
- egg mayonnaise,
- tikka or curry sauce,
- coronation chicken (more sauce than chicken),
- spaghetti hoops or tinned spaghetti,

Bowl of soup

- Butternut, carrot, broccoli and stilton, leek and potato, chicken, oxtail, cream of tomato, mulligatawny, smooth fish chowder (no sweetcorn).
- In Step 4 soups do not need to be completely smooth.
- Soup can be homemade, bought fresh, tinned or powdered.
- You will need to avoid soups that are very high in fibre and that contain lentils, beans, celery, peas, for example, minestrone, pea and ham.
- You can add silken or firm tofu for extra creaminess and added protein.
- Creamy soups have extra nutrition.
- Blended casserole dishes with added gravy can be made into a thick soup.

Melt-in-the-mouth crisps, crackers or breadsticks like butter puffs, Carrs® cheese melts, Cornish wafers, crisp bakes, French or Melba toast, Ritz®, Tuc® topped with:

- dips such as sour cream, taramasalata, smooth guacamole, cheese dip
- tuna, salmon or egg mayonnaise
- tinned spaghetti or ravioli
- cream cheese, cottage cheese
- vegan soft cheese alternatives
- smooth paté (tuna, mackerel, chicken liver, crab, salmon)
- avocado

Avocado with:

- flaked crab meat,
- prawns in a cocktail sauce,
- tuna and mayonnaise,

Try 1 of the following to add flavour:

- redcurrant jelly,
- mint jelly,
- soy sauce,
- tamari sauce,
- hoisin sauce,
- tomato sauce,
- harissa,
- Worcestershire sauce,
- Henderson's relish,
- smooth mustard,
- sriracha,
- Tabasco® sauce,
- nutritional yeast,
- wasabi paste,
- miso paste,
- Bovril®,
- Marmite®.

Try 1 of the following to add extra nutrition to soups and sauces:

- butter,
- spread,
- mayonnaise,
- cream,
- grated cheese,
- cream cheese,
- crème fraiche,

Puddings

We recommend you have a break after your meal before having pudding.

- Sponge pudding or cake softened with cream, smooth ice cream or custard, for example, Madeleines, Battenberg, Madeira, Angel Slices, caramel cake bars, mini chocolate rolls, lemon slices, banana bread.
- Apple crumble (no oats or dried fruit) softened with added cream, yoghurt, ice cream or custard (1 portion of fruit per day from the ‘to eat' list on page 26).
- Milk puddings like plain or chocolate custard, rice pudding, semolina, tapioca
- Smooth puddings such as blancmange, mousse, fruit fool, milk jelly, Angel Delight®, instant whip, egg custard, crème caramel, Gu® desserts.
- Smooth dairy free puddings like Alpro® soya desserts, Coconut Collaborative® Little Chocolate Pots.
- Tinned or stewed fruit with added cream, yoghurt, crème fraiche, custard or ice cream (1 portion of fruit per day from the ‘to eat' lists on page 26).
- Full fat smooth yoghurt, fromage frais, petit filou.
- High protein yoghurts such as Skyr®, Arla protein®, Lindahls Kvarg®.
- Dairy free yoghurts like Alpro® soya, The Coconut Collaborative®, The Collective®, COCOS®, KoKo®, Oykos®, Oatly Oatgurt® (only with ‘to eat' fruits on page 32).
- Smooth ice cream, sorbet, frozen yoghurt, Mini Milk®, mini Magnum®.

Add sugar, syrup, honey, seedless jam or marmalade, lemon curd, treacle, cream, custard, ice cream, crème fraiche, evaporated or condensed milk to add extra nutrition to puddings.

Snacks

Puddings can be eaten at any time of the day as a snack.

- Choose ‘full fat’ products for extra nutrition.
- ‘Dunked’ plain biscuits in a warm milky drink for example, rich tea, Nice®, malted milk, custard creams, bourbons, Oreo®, ginger nuts.
- Bowl of corn flakes or Rice Krispies® soaked in whole milk, milk alternatives or chocolate milk.
- Smooth chocolate bars.
- Crisps that ‘melt-in-the-mouth’ like Skips®, Wotsits®, Quavers®, Pom Bears®, Pringles® or Walkers®.
- Add smooth dips like sour cream, smooth guacamole, taramasalata, cheese dip.
- Melt-in-the-mouth crackers or biscuits with plain cream cheese or smooth paté (ensure this is well chewed before swallowing) (see page 34 for options).
- Spoonful of smooth nut butter such as almond butter, peanut butter.
- Spoonful of hazelnut spread or Nutella®.
- Spoonful of any other smooth spread for example, Lotus® Biscuit spread, smooth chocolate spread, Sweet Freedom® chocolate spread.
- Portion of soft cheese (no bits) like Laughing Cow®, Philadelphia®, Primula®, Quark® or cream cheese.

Nutritional supplements

Clear fluids do not provide all the nutrition your body needs. Your Dietitian will prescribe extra nutrition, such as nutritional supplement drinks or vitamins and minerals.

What do I do if my symptoms return?

If you start to have any of the following, please contact your Doctor or Dietitian right away:

- Feeling sick (nausea)
- Vomiting
- Feeling full after drinking or eating
- Your bowels do not open for more than 2 days
- A feeling of ‘tightness’ across your stomach
- Feeling bloated
- Tummy (abdominal) swelling
- Tummy (abdominal) pain

These symptoms could be a sign that your bowel may be blocked or partly blocked. It is important to speak to your Dietitian so that they can advise you what to do. If you cannot to speak to them right away, return to Step 1 and clear fluids only. Once your symptoms start to settle and you have spoken to your team, you can slowly move back to Step 2, then to Step 3 and then to Step 4.

What can I eat and drink after Step 4?

If you have had previous episodes of bowel obstruction or partial bowel obstruction you may need to continue with Step 4 for a long time. If you are doing well it may be possible to move on from Step 4.

At this point you may be able to introduce small amounts of toasted bread and slowly increase the amount of fruit and vegetables you eat from the ‘to eat' lists on pages 26 and 27.

Please always speak to your Doctor or Dietitian before making any changes since your medical condition will need to be considered before introducing some foods. They will advise you if it is possible to include other foods and how to do this.

Which foods can increase the risk of a blockage?

It is important to completely avoid the foods that may increase your chance of getting a blockage. We advise that you follow a strict **low fibre** diet whichever step you are following. This is because fibre is not easily digested. It can pass through your bowel in large lumps. It also bulks your poo and makes them solid.

Some foods need to be completely avoided (even if puréed). These include:

- the pips, skins and seeds of fruits and vegetables,
- wholegrains,
- lentils,
- chickpeas and beans,

These are not easily digested and may get caught in your bowel.

Bread and bread products like crumpets, muffins, doughnuts, also need to be avoided. They can form a bolus (ball) and may not pass through a narrowed space. This can increase your risk of an obstruction.

Which foods can I eat on Step 3 or 4?

The lists below will help you make the right choices when you are following Step 3 or 4 and are able to have solids. The lower fibre options are listed in the ‘to eat’ column.

The foods you are allowed to eat will need to be puréed if you are following Step 3 of the diet. Always check with your Dietitian if you are not sure.

Some of the foods on the ‘to eat’ lists may not be suitable in some of the steps. Always check with your Dietitian if you are not sure.

Which foods can I eat in step 3 or 4?

Fruits

Fruits to eat – limit to 1 portion per day (80g or 1 small handful) **Always check if these need to be Puréed (step 3)**	**Fruits to avoid**
• Apples (peeled) • Apricots (fresh, peeled) • Bananas • Guava (peeled and deseeded) • Mango • Melon (honeydew, cantaloupe, galia) (no seeds) • Nectarines (peeled) • Papaya • Pears (peeled) • Peaches (peeled) • Plums (peeled) • Watermelon (no seeds) Other • Fruit Juice (no bits) • Puréed, stewed or cooked fruit (without skins, pips or stones) • Tinned fruit (all fruits) • Fruit sauces and coulis with pips removed for example sieved raspberry coulis, apple sauce	• Ackee • Blackberries • Blackcurrants • Blueberries • Cherries • Clementines • Coconut • Cranberries (fresh and dried) • Dates • Dried apricots • Figs • Grapefruit • Grapes • Jackfruit • Kiwi • Longan • Lychee • Mandarins • Oranges • Passion fruit • Pineapple • Pomegranate • Prunes • Raisins • Raspberries • Redcurrants • Rhubarb • Satsumas • Strawberries **Other** • Fruit juice with bits • Smoothies

Vegetables

Vegetables to eat – limit to 1 portion per day (80 grams or 1 small handful)
Always check if these need to be puréed (step 3)
All vegetables need to be cooked and chewed well

- Aubergine (peeled and deseeded)
- Avocado
- Broccoli (no stalks)
- Butternut squash (peeled)
- Cabbage (white, green, red)
- Carrots (peeled)
- Cauliflower (no stalks)
- Celeriac
- Chilli purée
- Courgette (peeled)
- Cucumber (peeled and deseeded)
- Daikon (Asian radish)
- Garlic (roasted whole and squeezed as a purée)
- Garlic purée
- Gem squash (peeled)
- Ginger purée
- Horseradish purée
- Kimchi
- Lemongrass purée
- Marrow (peeled)
- Onion (well-cooked as a paste)
- Parsnips (peeled)
- Patty pan (peeled)
- Peppers (peeled and deseeded)
- Pumpkin
- Sauerkraut
- Shallots (well-cooked as a paste)
- Swede
- Swiss chard (leaves only, wellcooked)
- Tomato passata
- Tomatoes (peeled and deseeded)
- Turnips
- Smooth vegetable soups (made with allowed vegetables)
- Wasabi paste
- Wild garlic (well cooked)

Vegetables to avoid

- Asparagus
- Baby corn
- Bean sprouts
- Beetroot
- Bok choi
- Broad beans
- Brussels sprouts
- Cavolo nero
- Celery
- Chicory
- Chilli (fresh or dried)
- Coleslaw
- Edamame
- Endive
- Fennel
- French beans
- Garlic (whole, raw or undercooked)
- Gherkins
- Ginger (fresh)
- Globe artichokes
- Green beans
- Jerusalem artichokes
- Kale
- Kohlrabi
- Leeks
- Lemongrass
- Lettuce (all types like gem, iceberg, round)
- Mangetout
- Mushrooms
- Okra
- Olives
- Onion (whole, raw or undercooked)
- Pak choi
- Peas
- Pickled onions
- Radishes
- Rocket
- Runner beans
- Salad leaves
- Salad onions
- Samphire
- Savoy cabbage
- Seaweed
- Shallots (whole, raw or undercooked)
- Soya beans
- Spinach
- Spring greens
- Spring onions
- Sugar snap peas
- Sweetcorn
- Sweetheart cabbage
- Tomatoes (whole with skins and pips)
- Wasabi beans
- Watercress

- **Other**
- All skins, pips and seeds
- Tough stalks of vegetables like cauliflower, broccoli
- Raw vegetables
- Soup with whole vegetables and beans like minestrone

Breads and cereals

Breads and cereals to eat	Breads and cereals to avoid
• Bread sticks (plain). • Cereals like Cocopops®, Cornflakes®, Frosties®, Rice Krispies®. • Crackers and crispbreads that melt-in-the-mouth (without seeds and grains) for example, butter puffs. • Carrs® cheese melts, Cornish wafers, crisp bakes, Melba/French toast, Ritz®, TUC®. • Flours that are low in fibre (to make sauces or cakes) such as buckwheat, cornflour, cornmeal, gram flour, potato flour, rice flour, white flour. • Readybrek®.	• Bread of all types. For example, white, 50:50®, Best of Both®, wholemeal, brown, granary, seeded, bagels, baguettes, naan, pitta, rolls, sourdough, wraps. • Bread products like brioche, croissants, crumpets, hot-cross buns, muffins, pancakes, scones (cheese, fruit and plain), scotch pancakes, tea cakes. • Breakfast bars such as Belvita®, Nutrigrain® • Cereal bars like Nature valley®, Eat Natural®, Nakd®. • Cereals made with wholemeal, wholegrain and bran like All Bran®, Branflakes®, Cheerios®, Special K®, Weetabix®. • Cereals containing dried fruit, seeds or nuts such as Crunchy Nut Cornflakes®, Fruit n Fibre®, granola, muesli, Sultana Bran®. • Crackers and crispbreads made with wholemeal, wholegrain and seeds and that do not ‘melt-in-the- mouth’ like corn cakes, cream crackers, oat cakes, rice cakes, Ryvita®, water biscuits. • Flours that are high in fibre for example, bran flour, chickpea flour, granary flour, wholemeal flour, wholegrain flour. • Porridge and rolled oats.

Potato, rice and pasta

Potato, rice and pasta options to eat Always check if these need to be puréed (step 3)	Potato, rice and pasta options to avoid
• Gnocchi (white) with plenty of sauce • Grains: buckwheat, bulgur wheat, millet, pearl barley, quinoa, white couscous • Hash browns made without onions • Noodles: egg, kabuto, ramen, rice, • soba, udon, vermicelli • Pasta: quinoa pasta, spelt pasta, • white pasta • Polenta • Potatoes (peeled): sweet potatoes, white potatoes • Rice: basmati, jasmine, long grain, paella, risotto, white • Sago • Semolina • Tapioca • Yams (peeled)	• Amaranth • Farro • Freekeh • Hash browns (made with onions) • Pasta: Brown, wholemeal, wholegrain • Pastry • Potato skins • Rice: brown and wild • Stuffing • Waffles • Wholewheat giant couscous • Yorkshire pudding

Protein

Protein foods to eat	Protein foods to avoid
• Alternative meat products like Beyond meat®, Birds Eye®, Quorn®, Richmond® • Eggs • Fish (fresh, frozen, tinned – no bones) • Hemp powder • Houmous (smooth) • Liver sausage • Meat and meat products • Nut butters (smooth) • Paté (smooth), smoked salmon, trout, tuna, chicken, duck, liver, mackerel • Pea protein powder • Seitan • Soya mince • Spirulina powder • Tempeh • Tofu • Tahini	• Beans. For example, borlotti, cannellini, kidney, soya, baked beans and broad beans. • Coarse paté made with onions • Convenience items which contain whole grains and vegetables like onions, peppers • Crunchy nut butters • Falafels • Fish bones and skin • Fish fingers • Fish in batter or breadcrumbs • Houmous (with onions or whole chickpeas) • Maca powder • Nuts. For example, almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamia, peanuts, pecans, pinenuts, walnuts • Pulses. For example, lentils (red, green, brown, Puy), chickpeas, yellow split peas • Seeds such as chia, linseeds, poppy, pumpkin, sesame, sunflower • Wheatgrass powder

Dairy foods

Dairy foods to eat	Dairy foods to avoid
• All types of milk such as cow's, goat's, sheep's • All milk alternatives like almond, soya, oat, cashew, hazelnut, coconut, rice, hempseed, pea protein • Cream, sour cream, crème fraiche • Buttermilk • All types of cheese (without dried • fruit and nuts) • Vegan cheese • Butter, margarine, spread • Smooth yoghurt • Smooth ice cream and sorbet • Custard	• Cheese containing dried fruit or nuts. • Ice cream and sorbet containing nuts, seeds and whole fruits. • Yoghurt containing whole fruit, nuts, seeds or pips.

Sweet snacks

Sweet snacks to eat Always check if these need to be puréed (step 3)	Sweet snacks to avoid
• Boiled sweets, mints • Biscuits like Biscoff®, bourbon creams, Club®, custard creams, ginger nuts, malted milk, Nice®, Oreo®, Penguin®, wafers, rich tea, shortbread, sponge fingers dunked in a hot drink. • Cakes made with white flour, polenta or ground almonds (without dried fruit or nuts) softened with cream or custard. • Halva • Jaffa cakes • Jelly or milk jelly (without fruit) • Smooth milk, white or plain chocolate (without dried fruit and nuts) and 'melt-in-the-mouth' chocolates such as Kitkat®, Maltesers®, Wispa®.	• Biscuits containing dried fruit such as fig rolls, Garibaldi® • Biscuits made with wholemeal or wholegrain flour like digestives, Hobnobs® • Cakes made with dried fruit and nuts such as hot cross buns, teacakes, fruit scones • Cakes made with wholemeal or wholegrain flour • Cereal bars containing dried fruit and nuts • Chocolate with nuts and dried fruit • Crumpets, muffins • Flapjacks • Jelly made with fresh berries • Jelly sweets • Marshmallows • Mince pies • Nougat • Toffee

Savoury snacks

Savoury snacks to eat	Savoury snacks to avoid
• Melt-in-the-mouth crisps like Cheese puffs, chipsticks, french fries, Pom Bears®, Pringles®, Quavers®, Skips®, Wotsits®, • Melba or French toasts • Melt-in-the-mouth crackers like butter puffs, Carrs® cheese melts, Cornish wafers, crisp bakes, mini cheddars, Ritz® or TUC® sandwich biscuits • Plain bread sticks • Plain poppadoms • Smooth dips like sour cream, • taramasalata, guacamole	• Bombay Mix • Bread sticks with sesame seeds • Cheese straws • Crisps that do not melt-in-the-mouth like Hula Hoops®, Kettle® chips, McCoy's® crinkle cut, Monster Munch®, NikNaks®, Snack-a-Jack®, tortilla chips, Twiglets® • Dips that contain whole tomatoes, cucumbers, onions, salsa, tzatziki • Nuts and seeds • Popcorn • Stuffing • Vegetable, lentil, quinoa crisps

Condiments

Condiments to eat	
• Apple sauce (smooth) • Arrowroot (ground) • Baking powder • Barbecue sauce • Bicarbonate of soda • Bovril® • Brown sauce • Chutney (smooth) • Cocoa powder (no more than 10g • per day) • Curry sauces and pastes • Dried herbs • Egg white powder • Garlic granules • Gelatine • Golden syrup • Gravy granules • Harissa • Hemp powder • Henderson's relish • Hoisin sauce • Honey • Hazelnut spread • Horseradish sauce • Jam (smooth) • Lemon curd • Mango chutney (smooth) • Maple syrup • Marmalade (smooth) • Marmite® • Mayonnaise, vegan mayonnaise • Miso paste • Mustard – smooth (Dijon, English, French) • Nasi goreng sauce • Nut butters (smooth) • Nutella® • Nutritional yeast • Onion powder • Powdered spices • Redcurrant jelly (smooth) • Salad cream	• Salad dressing (smooth) • Salt and pepper • Soy sauce • Sriracha • Tabasco® sauce • Tamari sauce • Teriyaki sauce • Tomato ketchup • Treacle • Vegemite® • Wasabi paste • Worcester sauce

Condiments to avoid
• Candied peel • Chutneys with whole pieces • Fresh herbs • Glacier cherries • Jam with seeds • Lime pickle • Marmalade with peel • Mincemeat • Nut butters (crunchy) • Piccalilli • Pickles and relishes • Salad dressing (with wholegrain mustard) • Sweet chilli sauce • Wholegrain mustard

Contact details

You can contact our teams if you have any questions on the below telephone numbers:

Leicester Intestinal Failure Team / Adult Nutrition Support Team

0116 258 6988 (working hours Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm)

Dietetic and Nutrition Service

0116 258 5400 (working hours Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm)

Diet sheet written with acknowledgment to the work and resources from The Royal Surrey County NHS Foundation Trust Department of Nutrition and Dietetics

Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice

Visit www.uhleicester.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals.

To give feedback about this information sheet, contact uhl-tr.informationforpatientsmailbox@nhs.net

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہِ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

إذا كنت ترغب في الحصول على هذه المعلومات بلغةٍ أُخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો.

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email uhl-tr.equalitymailbox@nhs.net

We are a research hospital and you may be asked to take part in research

Re-use of this leaflet is restricted by Creative Commons license